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RECOMMENDATION TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

SUMMARY

The Executive Director recommends that, for 1997, the UNICEF Maurice Pate Award be presented to the Legal Assistance Centre of Namibia and that the Executive Board approve an allocation of $25,000 from general resources for this purpose.

* E/ICEF/1997/8.

1. Nominations for the 1997 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award were invited from the Governments of Board member countries, UNICEF representatives and regional directors, and National Committees for UNICEF in order to ensure a broad range of nominations. A total of 13 nominations were received as follows: four from Africa; one from the Americas and the Caribbean; two from Asia; one from the Middle East and North Africa; one for a global organization; and four for international organizations.

2. After a careful review of all the nominations, the Bureau endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Director that the 1997 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award be conferred upon the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) of Namibia in recognition of its significant contribution in the field of human rights, including child rights, through its key role in lobbying for legal reforms, and drafting of the Children Care and Protection Act and lobbying for its adoption by the legislature.

3. LAC is a non-profit, public interest law firm that was established in 1988, two years prior to Namibia gaining its independence from South Africa. At the time, LAC concentrated primarily on abuses of human rights by the pre-independence security forces. Following independence, LAC redirected its efforts to meet the new challenge of giving effective content to the human rights causes contained in Namibia's new Constitution.

4. In 1992, LAC established the Legal Education project to teach Namibian communities about the law and human rights. Its Volunteer Training Programme seeks to reach a wide audience through training community volunteers to provide legal education for their own communities. To date, hundreds of community groups have participated. The project also organizes activities around the "Day of the African Child" and "Human Rights Day".

5. Its Juvenile Justice project, established in 1995, collaborates with various government ministries and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to find alternatives to prison sentences for youth offenders.

6. LAC supports the development of government programmes, while monitoring the Government's human rights record and opposing actions, where necessary. In addition, it cooperates with other NGOs in helping to ensure that the rights of those refugees living in Namibia are protected.

7. In addition, LAC is actively involved in the following: assisting labourers in trying to improve the work place; helping women seeking to obtain child support from the fathers of their children; establishing programmes to prevent adolescents from turning to criminal activities; training community leaders and educators; conducting national surveys to produce data for legal advocacy; and environmental education activities.

8. The importance of the work of LAC has been recognized not only in Namibia, but also by other countries in the region, inspiring replication of its approach and encouraging a broad spectrum of combined government and civil society participation.

Background of the Award

9. At a special session on 11 November 1965, the Executive Board approved the recommendation of the Executive Director that the Nobel Peace Prize money received by UNICEF be used to establish a fund in memory of Maurice Pate, the first Executive Director of UNICEF (E/ICEF/537). Approval in principle was also given to a suggestion that the fund be used to strengthen the training or

experience of people serving in child welfare-related fields in countries with which UNICEF was cooperating. It was believed that a memorial fund which contributed actively to the general purpose of UNICEF would have particularly appealed to Mr. Pate.

10. In May 1966, the Board approved a plan submitted by the Executive Director (E/ICEF/542, paras. 76-83) for a memorial fund that would give recognition to the value of regional training facilities in fields benefiting children. Each year the fund would honour an institution in a developing country which adapted and offered its services to people from countries in the region. The institution selected would be given some modest assistance to strengthen its services to other developing countries.

11. By the end of 1978, the original funding and contributions for this Award were exhausted and, in 1979, the Executive Board approved the continuation of the Award from general resources (E/ICEF/P/L.1906 (REC)).

12. At its 1988 session, the Executive Board approved the recommendation that the Board confer annually the UNICEF Maurice Pate Award, as detailed in document E/ICEF/1988/P/L.37, for extraordinary and exemplary leadership in, and contribution to, the advancement of the survival, protection and development of children, whether on a national, regional or global scale. The Award could be conferred upon an institution, organization or individual with or without government affiliation. A timetable and procedures for the nomination and selection process were to be established by the secretariat (see E/ICEF/1988/13, annex I, paras. 45-47, and decision 1988/9).

13. By broadening the criteria for recognition to include (a) achievements on behalf of children, (b) provision of resources to further those achievements and (c) the creation of examples lending themselves to emulation, the Executive Board can use the Award to encourage significant efforts on behalf of children. While encouraging leadership for children by individuals, the monetary benefits of the Award can be used to further relevant activities, whether training, experience exchange or direct programme activity.

14. The Executive Board reviewed and revised the selection process and criteria in 1989, 1990, 1991 and 1994. The latest procedures and criteria as approved by the Board are contained in document E/ICEF/1994/L.16. According to those procedures, nominations shall be sought from the Governments of Board member countries, UNICEF representatives, regional directors and other secretariat offices and National Committees for UNICEF, and the Bureau shall review all nominations. The Award may not be conferred upon any Government or head of State or Government or upon any United Nations organization or official. The main criteria for the Award are: (a) extraordinary and exemplary leadership in, and contribution to, the advancement of the survival, protection and development of children; (b) innovative and inspirational work; (c) action on a national or regional scale with the potential for emulation; and (d) action that serves to encourage voluntary and grass-roots activities. Lastly, due regard shall be given to equitable geographical balance.

15. The UNICEF Maurice Pate Award has been given as follows:

Year	Institution	Region
Prior to 1980	Various institutions	Africa, Asia, Americas and the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, industrialized countries and global

1981	College of Health Sciences, Bahrain	Middle East and North Africa
1982	University of the West Indies (regional institution)	Americas and the Caribbean
1983	Pan-African Institute for Development	Africa
1984	International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh	Global
1985	National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, India	South Central Asia
1986	The League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	Global
1987	The Catholic Church of El Salvador	Americas and the Caribbean
1988	Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (Family Welfare Movement), Indonesia	East Asia and Pakistan
1989	Madame Suzanne Mubarak, Egypt	Middle East and North Africa
1990	Professor Olikoye Ransome-Kuti, Nigeria	West and Central Africa
1991	Child-to-Child Trust, United Kingdom	Industrialized countries
1992	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Bangladesh	South Asia
1993	The People and State of Ceara, Brazil	Americas and the Caribbean
1994	All-China Women's Federation, China	East Asia and the Pacific
1995	Professor Ihsan Dogramaci, Turkey	Central and Eastern Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States and Baltic States
1996	Regional Centre for Health and Development, Benin	West and Central Africa

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